

Unique Insights: Handbook for Promoting Equity & Inclusion in Faculty Searches

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Building a Diverse Search Committee

- Select committee members with **diverse networks** of contacts that can diversify the applicant pool.

Defining the Position

- Use “**should**” and “**preferred**” instead of “**must**” and “**required**.” Avoid stereotypically masculine attributes (e.g., aggressive, competitive, forceful) by using **gender-neutral and inclusive language** (e.g., accomplished, committed, successful).
- A candidate’s potential to add **intellectual diversity** and **work with and mentor** diverse students and colleagues should be **important selection criterion**.

Broadening the Applicant Pool

- Keep in mind that some highly ranked universities have only recently begun to actively produce URM doctoral graduates. Therefore, consider candidates from a **wide range of institutions**.

Develop Well-defined Evaluation Criteria and Forms

- Ensure evaluation criteria do not deter people with **non-traditional career patterns** (e.g., candidates who worked in labs or think tanks, who took family leave, first-generation scholars who started at non-research intensive institutions, whose careers were interrupted due to disabilities, among other situations).
- **Over-reliance on candidate “fit”** can reinforce existing **patterns of disparities**.

The Short List

- Prevent “halo” effects (relying on overall impressions vs. evidence-based judgments of criteria) by creating **separate shortlists** that rank candidates on **different criteria**. Take the top candidates across different criteria and consider whether there is still **evaluation bias**.
- Review the top women and/or minoritized candidates and check for **evaluation bias**. **Revise the shortlist** if such bias exists.

Campus Interviews

- **Candidates** should do **the majority of the talking** during the interview.
- **Schedule breaks** into interviewees’ days for personal/professional business and mental space.
- If candidates receive offensive remarks from faculty hostile to hiring URM candidates, take swift steps to defuse. Have a **protocol** for dealing with such situations and **make candidates aware** of the protocol if necessary. Avoid leaving candidates alone with hostile faculty.
- Introduce current URM faculty to **all candidates**, not just women and minoritized candidates.

Making a Hiring Recommendation

- Consider **only** the candidate’s ability to **perform the essential functions** of the job. Avoid judgments based on perceived race, ethnicity, religion, marital or family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
- **Do not engage in or permit others to engage** in a discussion of personal characteristics that are not job-relevant, or to make global evaluations unsupported by specific evidence.